

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

07-513

Orleans

EAS.1334

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: *(neighborhood or village):*

Photograph



Address: 285 Turnip Road

Historic Name: Ralph E. and Anna Briggs House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1940-1952]

Source: Deed research, 1952 USGS aerial map

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
None

Major Alterations *(with dates):*
None on record

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.17 acres

Setting: This parcel is set at the back edge of a dune above Campground Beach. The surrounding area includes modest cottages from the early- to late-20th century. The parcel is left in a natural state around this cottage, and a broad gravel parking area leads to a two-car garage.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date *(month / year):* April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

285 TURNIP ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

(Visibility of this house is limited, as are Assessor photos)

This house is similar in form to its neighbor to the left, 275 Turnip Road (EAS.1333). Based on views of this house from Turnip Road, this house is set at the back edge of a dune above Campground Beach, with a partial basement at the street level with two-bay garage and the main living spaces above. The house appears to have a simple, one-story, side-gable form. The house rests on a concrete block foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles. The rear (east) elevation has wood, 3/3 windows set fairly high on that story. It can be assumed that the west (bay-facing) elevation contains many more windows and/or sliding glass doors.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This house has an Assessor date of 1921. Unless this house was moved to this location, for which there is no evidence to date, that construction date is incorrect. This property is connected to the cottage development around Campground Road - one of the three earliest roads to extend west to Cape Cod Bay from the central sections of Eastham.¹ Despite the early development of the road, which was established to serve the Methodist camp meetings in the mid-19th century, the great majority of houses that border it, especially to the north, are 20th-century vernacular summer cottages and retirement houses.

One of the early subdivisions at the west end of Campground Road was registered in 1915 by Robert E. Horton, who was then living in Boston. It was the first of three subdivisions he registered. Horton, whose father Robert R. Horton, had been a grocer, railroad station master, and postmaster in North Eastham, purchased a large parcel abutting the area's first subdivision by Alonzo Higgins. The land Horton bought had belonged to farmers Barnabas K. Mayo and William H. Nickerson in the 19th century. Horton's first subdivision laid out sixty-four lots and four roads - the northward extension of Bay Road, Gail's Way, Marion's Way, and Gile Road. In 1925 and 1930 Horton expanded the subdivision to ninety-two lots. Finally, in April 1934 Horton planned his last subdivision in the area to the north of the 1925 plan, a plan that included this parcel.² It was an extension of Bay Road west to the bay, the platting of Memory Lane northward and the short Nans Way, Jeans Way, and Horton Way north of Bay Road.

¹ The following summary is adapted from the 2005 Area Form for Campground Road.

² Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 49/ Page 35.

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The United States Geological Survey (USGS) began conducting periodic aerial photographic surveys of Cape Cod in 1938, and there was no cottage in this location on the 1938 aerial survey (Photo 2). In 1940, Robert Horton sold Lot 97 in that 1934 plan (Figure 2), the lot on which this cottage would be built, to Ralph E. Briggs of Canton, MA.³ He bought other lots in the subdivision, so perhaps this cottage was built as an investment. but by the time the next survey was conducted in 1952, this cottage was in place (Photo 3), which would mean it was built sometime between 1940 and 1952.

Massachusetts-born Ralph Elsdon Briggs (1894-1964) married Anna Elizabeth Corey (1894-1986) in California in 1921. He worked as a salesman, first in the wool industry (1930, 1940 census) and then the paper industry (1950 census). In 1955, Briggs sold this cottage on Lot 97 to Edward and Mabel C. Howard of Winchester, MA.⁴ They were living in Lexington, MA in 1982 when they sold it to E. George and Shirley Hakula of River Vale, NJ.⁵ The property remains in the Hakula family.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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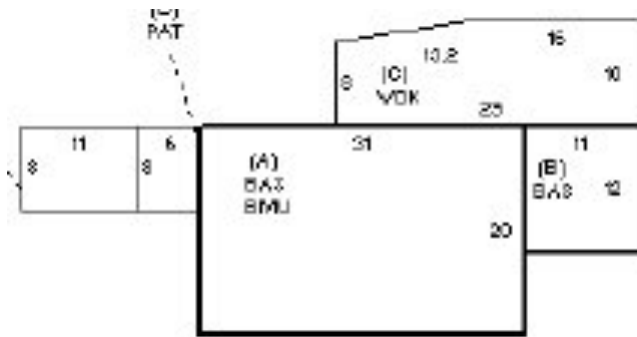


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.

³ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 565/ Page 581.

⁴ Book 915/ Page 547.

⁵ Book 3545/ Page 140.

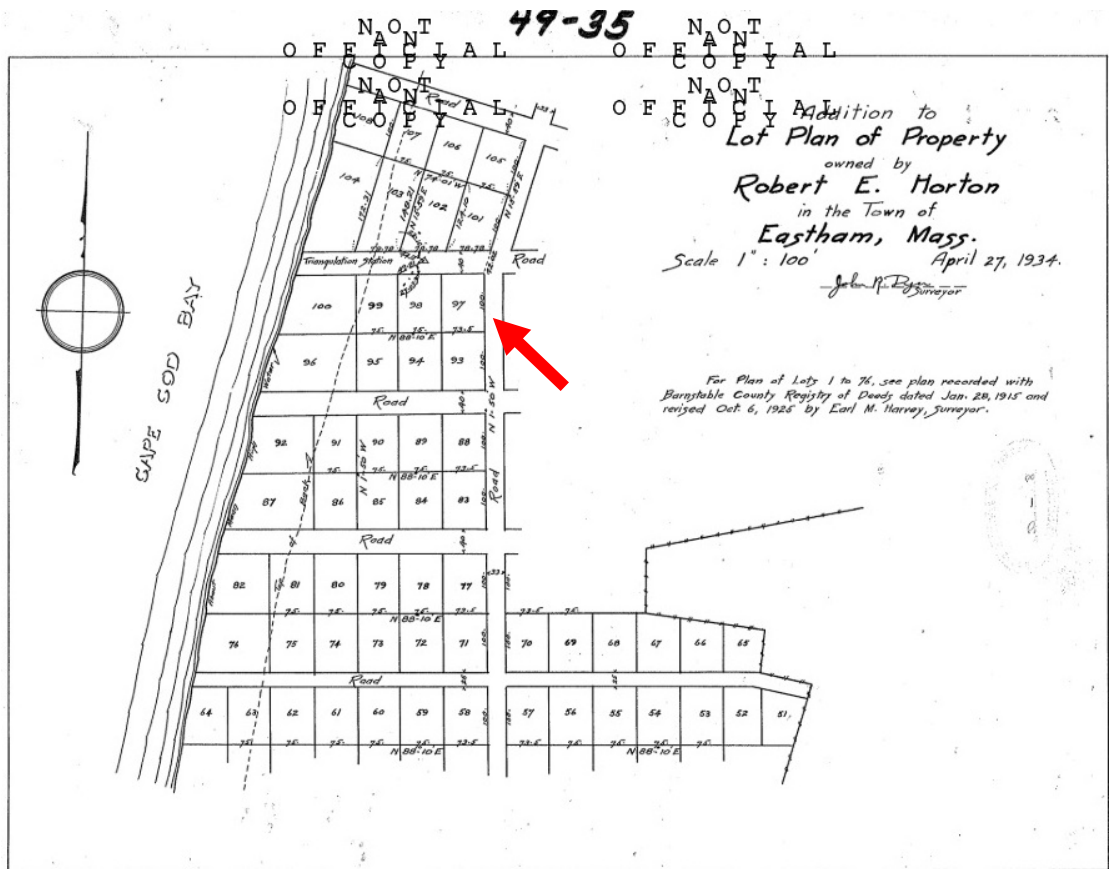


Figure 2. 1934 subdivision plan for Robert E. Horton (circle around Lot 97 added).



Photo 2. Detail of 1938 USGS aerial photo (arrow to future Location of 285 Turnip Way added).

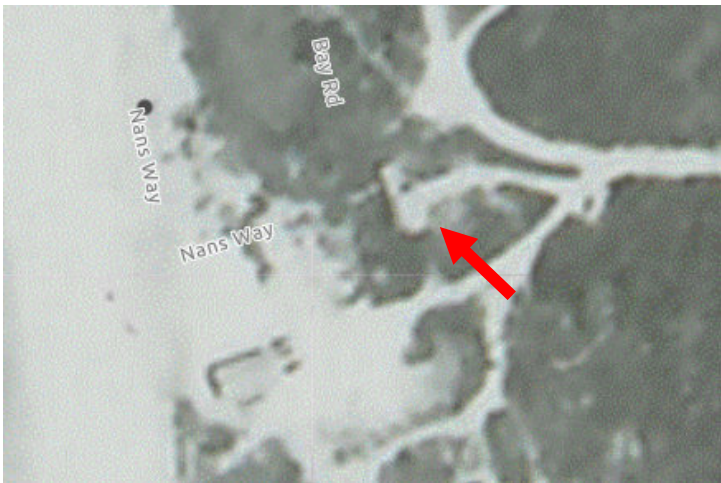


Photo 3. Detail of 1952 USGS aerial photo (arrow to future location of 285 Turnip Way added).

Notes: It appears that the USGS struggled to accurately label the small streets in this region – street names are not correct in the correct locations.